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ABSTRACT

For an exploration of the components and sources of disputatiousness, Canadian education administrators identified 181 legislators and school board members in 5 regions (British Columbia, Quebec, Prairie provinces, Atlantic provinces, and Ontario) who provided data in interviews. Two coders' judgments of interview transcripts subjected to factor analysis produced four components of disputatiousness: conflict-mindedness, moralism, cynicism, and cabal-finding. (Findings indicate that disputatiousness or its absence is attributable to historical influences such as the founding fathers (the hierarchical and status-conscious Britons in British Columbia), formative events (the bicultural clash of French and English founders in Quebec), technologies of communication (the voluntary and cooperative associations created in the Prairie provinces to cope with such problems as adverse weather and vast distances), and the economic infrastructure (described by Marxists in the Atlantic provinces as traditionally under corporate control, which hinders the development of competing ideologies). All four influences exist in Ontario. Statistics suggest legislators and board members in the Prairie and Atlantic provinces are less confrontative than counterparts in other regions. Suggested further research includes a study of random samples of politicians to ascertain this study's validity and a comparison of this study's findings to those of other regional studies. (PB)

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THE DISPUTATIOUSNESS OF CANADIAN POLITICIANS OF EDUCATION: A PARTIAL REPORT OF A NATIONAL STUDY

Richard G. Townsend, OISE

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THE DISPUTATIOUSNESS OF CANADIAN POLITICIANS OF EDUCATION: A PARTIAL REPORT OF A NATIONAL STUDY

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Objective

> How do political leaders decide whether to support, not support, or remain neutral concerning educational policies and programs? Are their actions influenced on a compartmentalized set of beliefs in education?
>
> (Kimbrough, 1982)

By way of answering his own question, Kimbrough then proposes that elected leaders in education are motivated by a "vision of economics, finance, functions of government, nature of society, and other aspects of what a community, state, and nation should be (including education)." Yet, in spite of his own intensive work and that of relevant others--Kimbrough cites North American studies in the politics of education by Lutz and Iannaccone, Levine, Goldhammer and Farmer, Hubbard, and Lee, but could as well have cited Minar (1966) and more recent work by Mitchell (1980), Peterson (1976), and Wirt (1977), Kimbrough still only can hypothesize. An expanded research effort is necessary, he says, before aptly portraying leaders' modes of thinking about school governance.

This is the first of several reports by one researcher interested in contributing to that eventual portrait. The paper is based on data collected between 1978-81.

Conceptual Overview

This account seeks only the first of two payoffs that Kimbrough postulates for a research agenda, viz., a contribution to the sophisticated understanding of political forces that may affect public schooling. Kimbrough's second outcome is more immediately instrumental:

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* Many people must be thanked for help on this work. But since the statistical portion was the most challenging, I particularly want to indicate a debt to Daphne Tucker, my programmer, and William Postl, my consultant. Steve Lawton was a great encourager in this vein too.

to provide educators with data or strategies that might "move political systems" or "outmaneuver" feared but impending changes mobilized by politicians. To be sure, knowledge of politicians' thought processes could be valuable to administrators with a need to "read" or to "socialize" their political masters. Nothing in this report, however, should be construed as advancing (or, for that matter, retarding) that more controversial and instrumental dividend. More detachedly, findings are simply presented here in an effort to grasp a hitherto-unexplored "cognitive predisposition" of elected politicians for education.

That term "cognitive predisposition" is taken from Robert Putnam's ambitious inquiry into the political beliefs of 93 Members of the British House of Commons and 83 deputai in the Italian Chamber of Deputies (Putnam, 1972). To date, Putnam's work, much admired by political scientists (Epstein, 1976, Lane, 1974, Merelman, 1976), has had no discernible impact on the study of the politics of education. Kimbrough even ignores it in his otherwise-excellent literature review of those within the cognate discipline generally interested in officials' beliefs. (Kimbrough does mention, though, McClosky et al. Ladd, and Agger, Goldrich, and Swanson.) Partially to redress that gap, this investigation in some ways replicates and extends Putnam's research on 176 legislators. It offers a partial analysis of beliefs of 181 politicans of education. Those persons come from all ten provinces.

Assumptions

Three related but distinct premises undergird this examination, much as they did Putnam's work (explicitly) and Kimbrough's (implicitly).

First, in any political system, some elected officials are more interested, involved, and influential than others. Positing that these vote-getters deserve close scrutiny is not to say, however, that they are the only significant actors of governing elites, i.e., other researchers have well-established that administrators, interest-group leaders, and eminent grises are also actors with potency.

A second assumption is that the character and development of a political system are shaped by the set of empirical beliefs that help define situations in which political actions take place. Less formally,

attitudes matter. Accordingly, the "Findings" section of this report will lay out part of a set of attitudes (one cognitive predisposition) that can be presumed to make some difference. Also seen as important: the situation or, to be more exact, the situational stimuli. With those in mind, it is

> sometimes instructive to think of attitude and situation as being in a kind of push-pull relationship; the stronger the attitudinal press for a course of action, the less the need for situational stimulii, and vice-versa (Greenstein, 1969).

In the spirit of that observation, the "Interpretation" section of this paper will attempt to link the empirical findings on a particular cognitive predisposition (disputatiousness) to what is generally known about a species of situational stimuli, political culture (wherein attitudes are assumed to be formed). Thus, the "Findings" section will deal with the "push" of certain attitudes while the "Interpretation" section will focus on the "pull" of certain forces in the situation or--in the conceptual terms of this paper--the political culture.

A third assumption is this: in responding to several issues in their situation, political figures reveal their habits of thought. In other words, a member of a political elite is presumed to have a pattern to his or her beliefs. Throughout an interview, ways in which that politician discusses several issues are held to be fairly similar to--or at least not dramatically different from--ways he or she discusses those same issues with elected colleagues, constituents, advisers, and friends. Put another way, the Canadian politician of education is assumed to express underlying cognitive predispositions; they come through on different topics at different times.

To this point, the scope of attitudes has been narrowed to only subsume cognitive predispositions; situational stimuli have been delimited, moreover, to only include elements of the political culture. Yet, the realm for potential study is still vast. So, at this point it is pertinent to state what this paper does <u>not</u> try to cover. The research is not trying to isolate those fairly specific but perhaps transient <u>opinions</u> of educational elites. Gallup polls and Delphi exercise already exist, for instance, on perceptions of Canadian leaders on selected Canadian school issues (Livingstone, 1982, Barrington, 1982).Nor

is this an effort to probe the deep-seated motivations of political leaders; a host of inquiries exploiting the Getzels-Guba framework, for example, already attend to presumed needs and psychological dispositions of various actors in education.

More on the Conceptual Framework

Putnam defines a cognitive predisposition as a subset of a political belief system. It is a central or primitive orientation that a political person has about the nature of society, government, and the "generalized other." That adjective "generalized" is crucial--cognitive predispositions are thought to be the global bases for specific beliefs about quite particular objects. Putnam chooses to look at a single cognitive predisposition that also has preoccupied political philosophers since the classic debates between Socrates and Thrasymachus: is society fundamentally harmonious or is discord and conflict the essence of political relations? More elaborately, do politicians see themselves as functioning in a society based on cooperation and widely shared values or ideals? Alternatively, do those in politics primarily see themselves as involved in the violent clash of conflicting demands for limited goods?

In this regard, Putnam found that virtually none of his respondents took an extreme position. That is, few indicated that conflict of interest was either all-pervasive and totally irreconcilable or that absolutely no real conflict of interest existed. More importantly, though, Putnam could conclude that the bulk of the Italians in his population were exceptionally sensitive to conflict in society and politics; priorities were contested, decidedly so. On the other hand, British politicos typically were more concerned with areas of shared interest. Specifically, consensuality and the de-emphasis of social conflict was nearly four times as common among British respondents as among Italian ones. Further, twice as many Italians saw conflict as so endemic as to be difficult to overcome. Refering to these and other data, Putnam persuasively could contend that a politiican's orientation to social cleavage and social consensus was a fundamental characteristic of his or her view of the world.

For this Canadian study, one starting point was curiosity: since England is one of the founding nations of Canada, would a population of

Canadian politicians come across as non-conflictually as Putnam's parliamentarians of the House of Commons? As well, curiosity prompted this researcher to wonder about specialist-politicians in education: do they manifest as measurable stances toward conflict and consensus as Putnam's generalists did at two federal levels of European politics?

Borrowing from Dahl, Putnam offers the depiction below as a portion of the logical structure of his inquiry:[1]

I		II
Factors determining beliefs	⟶	Political beliefs

Since Putnam's work in 1973, however, political scientists have become more reflective of the interactive quality of elements such as the two above. Consequently, they assert that the arrow in such a diagram could just as plausibly point in the opposite direction. Hence, a belief in a socialist ideology--when strongly reforced by other socialist ideologues in government--ultimately might lead to a socialistic shift in the economic infrastructure of society. In this paper, however, no attention will be paid to implications of the flow of beliefs back toward determining factors: the intent of Putnam's diagram will be honored. But, the order of presentation will be reversed. Initially, a cognitive predisposition of a population of Canadian politicians of education will be mapped quantitatively, via factor analysis. That quality will be shown as the disputatiousness mentioned in this paper's title. Its constituent parts will be presented as conflict-mindedness, moralism, cynicism, and cabal-finding. Afterwards, to capture the quality of that lively predisposition and its components, illustrative quotations from interviews with those politicians will be introduced. Next, searching for explanations of that configuration, the researcher will muster the "softer" semi-historical approaches of such students of political culture as Hartz, Lipset, Innis, and Marx. Importantly, the notion of exploiting this mix of approaches does not stem from Putnam whose work was not overly historical. Instead it is taken from the synoptic writings of a Canadian political scientist, David V. J. Bell (1981).[2] The specific political cultures that he describes differ from the ones reviewed here, but in general his taxonomy is followed.

In a nutshell, the logical structure of this inquiry:

I	II
A Cognitive Predisposition (toward Disputatiousness; its components are Conflict-Mindedness, Moralism, Cynicism, and Cabal-Finding)	← A Determining Factor (of political culture; its approaches are Genes of the Founders (Hartz), Formative Events (Lipset), Technology of communication (Innis), and Economic infrastructure (Marx)

This study is meant to be illustrative rather than comprehensive. In a later study, cognitive predispositions other than those reviewed here could well be mapped.

Procedures

Putnam was able to interview about one-fifth of his random sample within two federal parliaments. A first methodological departure from him is to focus instead on politicians at the provincial level of education.[3] A second methodological deviation is to opt against a random sample; the rationale is twofold: (1) certain provincial legislators concentrate more than others on educational issues--they are the ones who become the Ministers, Parliamentary Assistants, Education Critics, and spokespersons for new pedagogical causes; (2) some board members at the local level carry more provincial weight than others--they are the ones who become involved in trustee associations, in meetings with legislators, in pressing cases for governmental reform and stability; they are the ones who may link with assorted interest groups in coalitions, and so forth. The criteria for inclusion in the population, then, were twofold: tenure in elective office (legislator or board member) and political clout.

From preliminary interviews at two Short Courses on Educational Leadership at Banff (annually sponsored by the Canadian Education Association and attracting board and Ministry decision-makers from all ten provinces), high-level administrators were identified in Education Ministries, at various-sized boards in diverse parts of each province, and with administrator organizations. Letters were sent to those persons asking for names of (1) the ten most important legislators for education

in their province, and (2) the ten school board members with the most important provincial impact. Usually, these nominators also were asked to indicate other administrators who could furnish 20 names from a different perspective, and these supplementary sources also were approached. In the end, each province was represented by seven to ten nominators. To be sure, they all represented an administrative viewpoint instead of, say, a curriculum consultant's or layman's perspective. The rationale for this choice was that the administrators usually are well-placed in the policy process to know of political actors, i.e., supervisory officers have a pipeline to pertinent data and a host of contacts to mine for information.

Almost 70 percent of the sought-after nominators replied, and their suggestions were pooled.[4] Names of legislators and board members mentioned most frequently were the ones to whom introductory letters were sent, explaining the study in general terms. An appointment within a certain time span was requested. In this, the acceptance rate was over 95 percent--perhaps because the topic interested them, perhaps because the persons liked to talk, perhaps because these elites were given assurances of confidentiality. (In subsequent sections of this paper, a handful of role-incumbents are specified--but these particular persons waived the confidentiality, usually saying something to the effect that "I'm used to being quoted" or "Let the chips fall where they may.")

A major regret, it cannot be denied, is that interviews were not gained with three nominated legislators in Quebec's governing Parti Quebecois regime. For this reason, Quebec is the only province which did not furnish data from a Minister of Education. At the time of data-gathering for this study, these men were out campaigning for a vitally important referendum on Quebec's independence from Canada. Letters (in French) from anglophone Ontario--perhaps seeming remote and relatively academic--just may not have "gotten through" to these francophone leaders. Liberal francophone and anglophone members in Quebec's legislature were interviewed, however, along with most of the sought-after board members.[5]

In essence, these individuals participated in what Dexter (1970) calls "elite interviewing," a semistructured form designed to secure the maximum benefit from the knowledge and insights which a respondent possesses. In particular, elite interviewing is characterized by the following:

1. The interviewees' definition of the situation is stressed;
2. The interviewee is encouraged to structure the account of the situation; and
3. The interviewer can introduce to a considerable extent his or her notion of what he/she regards as relevant.

As if to verify Dexter's thesis, a number of the well-informed influentials in this study insisted on explaining from the perspective of their own terms of reference. Their interpretations of the "real" problems were encouraged. Thereupon, while the same basic questions were asked of all the respondents, the interviewer could go beyond the interview guide, pursuing themes broached by the respondent.

The average length of interview was about 50 minutes. Variations were considerable, though. The minimum time was 22 minutes; the longest, 7 hours. In the latter case, a somewhat adversarial early-afternoon conversation continued convivally over supper and drinks.[6] Other than four cases where the respondent preferred that the interviewer take notes, the tape recorder was used (thanks to the respondents' permission).

The micro-strategy, if not the precise queries, paralleled Putnam's. Consistently across interviews and across issues, the questioner tried to preserve the tone of a genuine conversation while offering topics for the respondent's comment. The open-ended questions began by eliciting information close to the elite's experience, e.g., likes and dislikes about the politics of education, general views of current problems facing schools. Then, after discussion (preferably extended) of two or more policy issues, the respondent was asked to describe and assess the policy-making process. Topics subsequently included the nature of political leadership, the kinds of changes the respondent wanted in education governance, the role of various parties in the policy-making arena. Back in Toronto, these interviews were transcribed.

These data became grist for judgments by two independent coders, neither of them the principal investigator. Each was to pore over each transcript privately and, on the bases of responses therein, place that interviewee within a given classification scheme. Coding criteria were precise and explicit, adapted for the context of school governance from Putnam's rigorous codebook. At the outset of their several months of work, the coders were brought together to confront their divergences in

assessing individual interviewees. It can be presumed that thereafter they came to better understand the codebook's criteria: in time, a body of "common law" was build on how to treat particular sorts of ambiguous responses, how to delimit thresholds between adjacent categories of certain codes, and so on.

Fifteen of the questions on the four code sheets for each interviewee did not require each judge to confront or even to muse prolongedly: each coder simply had to mark the manifest answer to a particular query, e.g., "How many years have you been on the board? What is the solution the respondent proposes for the bilingualism issue?" In those few instances where respondents gave answers which were idiosyncratic enough to defy codebook criteria, each judge was expected on his or her own to take into account the respondent's other answers in that portion of the interview. The threefold test of comprehensibility, plausibility, and consistency was applied to instances where incongruencies appeared. Generally, as Putnam also found, the inter-coder reliability of those judgments was quite high--over 85 percent of the ratings were similar; they were virtually identical with the more common and straightforward cases. The validity of these codings is harder to measure--coders sometimes may have overemphasized context--but as Putnam remarked, "There is every reason for believing that it (validity) can be quite high, perhaps even higher if the coders are allowed to express their broader judgments."

Most of the difficult coding involved ascertaining not <u>what</u> an interviewee thought about such a subject as declining enrolment, but identifying <u>how</u> he or she thought about it. For this, latent-feature coding proved necessary, and again Putnam's lead was followed. Although he made every attempt to construct an exhaustive list of latent features that might be encapsulated under the general term of cognitive predisposition, and although the present researcher supplemented Putnam's list, probably everyone--coders, respondents, readers of this paper--could add a favorite category and support the deletion of another.

One of the 30 items taken from Putnam was conflict-mindedness, i.e., the prominence the respondent gave to conflicting interests in his or her discussion. In at least two separate parts of each transcript, each judge was to rate the interviewee's discussion of conflict along a five-grade Likert scale.[7] On the average, by the time the judge had coded

the third page of the packet for each interview, he or she was at least 55 minutes away from having rated the respondent's conflict-mindedness on the first code sheet (that covered the interview's first segment); the judge also was at least 30 mintues away from reaching a judgment on conflict-mindedness on the second code sheet (gauging the interview's second segment). This wide spacing of related questions in both the interview and in the code sheets represented an effort to reduce two perils: (1) the respondent slipping into an "acquiescence response set" by agreeing, almost automatically, with adjacent or related items, and (2) the coder spuriously allowing the judgment of one item in one part of a conversation to influence his or her later judgment of a similar item.

Among other steps taken to reduce possible bias are the following: (1) the interviewer did not probe for data that might have been personally threatening (e.g., campaign finances, statuses within a board or caucus) --the aim was to evoke frankness and the consequence was that the coders judged the interviewees as speaking quite freely in this regard[8]; (2) the two coders of each interview were expected to use equal yardsticks in rating respondents from such different populations as women, Liberals, farmers, Premiers, French speakers, and younger politicians. Thus, for example, respondents were coded in a random geographical order, so that a regional bias would not artificially inflate or deflate the coders' judgments. Even so, no guarantee exists that false consistency and inter-item assimilation has been altogether avoided. Just as unfortunately, some respondents may have given ritualistic responses rather than truly authentic ones. The reader should exercise reasonable caution, therefore, in examining the quantitative evidence.

A final contribution to that statistical data base comes from judgments that the two coders independently made on their fourth (and final) code sheet for each interview. There, based on the entire transcript, each coder was to make seven global judgments about selected latent features of the respondent's beliefs. Thus, for example, a judge could indicate if an interviewee seemed tolerant of ideas, basing that indication on the degree to which that interviewee appeared willing to entertain questions contrary to his or her own. Coders did achieve a high degree of accord in these global rankings (from 69 to 91 percent). Nonetheless,

because each judge made these global determinations only once per packet of code sheets, the rating does not have the statistical reliability of several judgments made for diverse parts of the interview. As such coding can be open to question, it is used in this paper only to buttress more recurrent measures. Note, then, that the cynicism and cabal-finding components of the cognitive predisposition toward disputatiousness are, in fact, such global ratings; treat them with prudence.[9]

The double codings for each respondent were entered into the computer. Each respondent then was assigned a summary score on each of the study's 37 characteristics which were identified in at least two discussions of different issues. These summary scores were inter-correlated by the tau-beta statistic, a measure of ordinal correlation between the two independent judges. In this way, the most consensual scorings were identified for further analysis. These 16 scorings all had at least a tau-beta of .75; with statistical consultation, the various contingency tables were inspected, and extreme cases of discrepancy were eliminated from analysis. Some 21 other items (such as cost-mindedness) were eliminated from further analysis, coders' judgments being too variant and respondents' allusions to the item being too obscure, brief, and unrepeated from issue to issue.

The most efficient and clear method of discovering whether the 16 reliable judgments clustered into any intelligible pattern was by factor analysis. So, the matrix of intercorrelations of the surviving 16 items was factor-analysed using the oblique rotation procedure.[10] From this conventional statistical program, the four items which emerged to form one of the study's factors were, as indicated earlier, conflict-mindedness, moralism, synicism, and cabal-finding. All had positive and substantial loadings:

Conflict-Mindedness	.42
Moralizer	.35
Cynicism	.64
Cabal-Finding	.76

Taken together, these components can be termed disputatiousness.

Findings

This statistical coherence deviates from Putnam's factor analysis of cognitive predisposition's elements. There, he found moralism to be in the same cluster as (1) the tendency to cite particular beneficiaries of

policies and (2) the tendency to make practicality a key criterion in policy-making. As it happened, both these categories washed out of the present study's statistical computations: coders were not consensual enough on the first to make it a reliable item, and the second did not load substantially onto any of the four emergent factors. Returning with his findings to Putnam's work, this researcher was surprised that cynicism and cabal-finding there had not clustered with conflict-mindedness. In that British-Italian study, the latent feature of conflict-mindedness turned out to be correlated with the respondent's ideological position on a left-right spectrum--the more a member saw the world as conflictful, the more likely that legislator was to be leftist, and vice-versa. But at the aggregate or national level in Canada, where all the items were first treated statistically, ideological position was not noticed frequently enough to survive as a robust item.

With the uncovering of the factor (or summary term) of disputatiousness, an intent of this study has been achieved--a cognitive predisposition of important politicians in Canada has been measured with some reliability. And intuitively the correlations seem to make sense. The more conflict a political leader sees in an educational issue, the more he or she also may tend (1) to attribute blame to others (moralism), (2) to see disparity between the words of fellow-policymakers and those fellows' actions or true intentions (cynicism), and (3) to see authorities as a well-defined, self-interested clique (cabal-finding).

An elaboration follows of each of the qualities of disputatiousness.

Conflict-Mindedness

As implied near the preceding mention of Socrates, a series of questions induced the respondents' interpretations of the relative importance of conflict and cooperation in government, society, and community. Sometimes respondents have an image of conflict that is short-term and direct, e.g.,

> *-- I told the superintendent that if he didn't do anything about it (putting a fence around a school), I'd break his neck...Well, I got the fence.*

At other times, the conflict is formulated in more long-term and less physical terms, e.g.,

-- One day I asked my child where he ate lunch (at elementary school). He said he was eating in the science room. He said that was the only place to eat lunch. I decided to visit the school and found the school was in such a mess that I couldn't believe that they had kids going there. It was a disaster area...I became involved with other parents to get a new school. It took four years of fighting the Minister and the Deputy Minister. They told us, "Yes, you can have the school," and "No, you can't have the school," etc. We kept the fight going strong and finally we got it.

For another, conflict can be timed in terms of being in or out of power:

--My first phase on the board was when I was in opposition. That was a three or four year period in which my goal was to raise the issues and to polarize people. I didn't intend so much to win as to call attention to the issues. The second phase (of my time on the board), as I got close to power, was trying to work out a variety of solutions and tradeoffs; clearly when I got to ppower, the goal was getting the job done...Part of all this is the politics of style: I guess what I am suggesting is when I raise the same issue in power as versus when I raise it in opposition, I could present it in a far less abrasive manner, I could present it in a genuine caring way. Then it was good for us all, and not for just this forgotten segment of society (that I originally championed). As board chairman, my hair was shorter, I was gentler, I wore a shirt, tie, and coat (rather than my counterculture garb of my opposition phase). The only thing I've kept (from the earlier period) are my leather boots, which I still wear.

Responses about conflict also covered a range of philosophic positions, many of which are already familiar to students of educational politics. Here, for instance, is a board member who votes for educational solutions that she believes are technically and pedagogically correct:

--I found it difficult to accept criticism for being "too principled." I find that a strange criticism, but it was said to me in an insulting way. So we're trying to make policy and yet we can't trust the people on the board with you because their motives might be self-serving (not kid-serving).

And, alternatively, here is a board chairman who--in appreciating the "creative tension" between options--is not so sure that there's necessarily "one best"way to achieve educational excellence:

--Most of the issues that are really dicey are going to saw off in the middle...You have to go through a process of pushing and pulling, and you arrive at a position which may not be what you want, but it's better, (more balanced), than what it was before. You have to live with that compromise. That's the name of the game.

Not surprisingly, a number of board members appear sensitive to areas of shared interest; they conceive of themselves as carrying out wishes of their constituents--e.g., "after all, we are accountable to the people." Others, though, regard themselves in more of a Burkean cast; as trustees, they are quite empowered to differ in conflicts from their electorates, e.g.,

> *--Sometimes you have to lead, but...If we gave the public the reins, then we'd get a public school system that was too rigid, too restrictive, it wouldn't allow for enough diversity.*

It is important to remind the reader that conflict-mindedness is one of the 16 items for which reliable correlations were found to exist between rankings on two or more separate discussions of issues. For example, early in an interview, a francophone board chairman went to some length to emphasize a conflict he'd had over school busing with a francophone superintendent who typically "is not used to having his word questioned." Then, some 20 minutes later during a conversation about a second issue, this board chairman again took an adversarial stance, e.g.,

> *--I told the teacher (who was publicly advocating the elimination of bilingual schools and the inauguration of francophone-only ones) that if he kept pushing in this wrong-headed direction, I was going to give him dictation and publish the (low) results. That calmed him down for a while.*

After that, in an elaboration of yet another issue later in the transcript, this trustee also viewed the world as an arena of conflict. This time the discord was between strongly vying elements of a provincial trustees' association.

By contrast, another chair within the same province regularly downplayed tensions within the same trustees' association, defined teachers and trustees as getting along rather famously, and pictured teachers and trustees as very much being on the same wave length. Indeed, her image of conflict was almost whimsical:

> *--Boards are queer things. You think that maybe members will get excited about something or that their attitude might be negative, but it doesn't happen that way. They don't get excited and they don't object...Sometimes I offer token opposition for the pure stimulation to see what I can stir up, hoping for some spunk. But of course I don't do that with things that really make a difference.*

This woman was consistent in her relatively low conflict-mindedness, viewing the world as a field for general harmony. Most of the other respondents similarly adhered, across issues, to a particular niche on this same disputatious-conciliatory scale.

Moralism

As might be anticipated in an era of diminishing lay support for education, moralistic comments frequently are directed against school people. For instance, a populist leader of a legislative Opposition, soon to become a Premier, is not reluctant to assign blame for his province's "ineffective and inefficient" educational system:

> *--There is the chauvinst tendency for professional educators to put down parents who have lesser education. Professionals shouldn't be in a position to intimidate parents, but here they are...In the Education Department, they imagined for themselves the responsibility of the highly educated to show that they are superior to ordinary mortals, and so they have to produce something magical now and again to protect their image...Anomalies crop up in their new systems: in a home with three children, there can be three [school] buses going in three directions for them...The Education Department people are bright boys who went through a subsidized educational system, subsidized by the taxpayers, and they were taken into the bureaucracy as bright boys. But they never earned their keep in a practical sense from one day in their lives. From the taxpayers' point of view, they are parasites; they have no concept of the day-to-day tensions and problems of coping in a competitive world.*

Attacked as educators at the provincial level may be, respondents still have enough blame left over to pass around to those working at the local level, e.g.,

> *--I can recall being at a school where we had a teacher teaching a gifted class and the same teacher was teaching a very slow class and was expected to basically work from two textbooks. The teacher threw away the textbooks and started a creative English course. They (the pupils) wrote poetry, did Greek mythology, and did all these things and the supervisor said, "Oh my god, this is terrible," and the teacher said, "Why? The kids are creating things, understanding, developing their English languages and skills, their appreciation and their thinking." The supervisor said, "Yes, but in years to come, when these children go into the next grade, next year's teachers are going to have difficulty in being that creative, that progressive because we don't have other English teachers as good as you." So, what supervisors are saying to me is, "Let that*

> *good teacher be a mediocre teacher so that next year the children won't be able to judge and be able to see how poor some of the other teachers are." That attitude bothers me...It impedes true education.*

At other times, the culprit is thought to be a set of educators functioning politically outside government's formal organization, e.g.,

> *--I've been disappointed that there isn't more leadership on educational and societal needs from the provincial teachers' association. Everything they study now is for their own negotiating advantage.*

One can expect Opposition legislators to blame problems in skill development, knowledge levels, and testing on the government of the day. That happened in this study's interviews, but even members of a ruling Caucus can attribute the source of educational problems to their own government, e.g.,

> *--As a member of Parliament, I really feel powerless. You really do because you are only one small cog. I have to get approval from 32 other people in Caucus for everything, and that is hard because in many cases you can't convince people. They are farmers or businessmen or lawyers, but yet, even though I am an educator, I have to convince them of the details...This is the longest and probably the most in-depth conversation concerning education that I've had with anybody--Caucus members, Opposition members, constituents, and so <u>that</u> tells you a lot.*

Finally, with educators and legislators both to bash, only infrequently is the source of a problem deemed to be outside of the governmental arena. In those rare cases, blame is affixed to a stratum, e.g.,

> *--The upper-middle class arranges to have its wants taken care of first. Most public services benefit them the most...They are the most vocal.*

Or, the source of the problem diffusely is held to be almost all of society, e.g.,

> *--People don't have the courage to pick up a good book that's going to challenge them, and fairly regularly. I don't mean just the newspaper or <u>Reader's Digest</u> either.*

Cynicism

Along with such moralizing go signs of cynicism, an aggressive demeanour that imputes the motives of others. It can reflect a disillusionment about the practices or people of educational governance. Such cynicism is found in all spheres. For instance, a Minister of Education grieves:

> *--A lot of evaluation goes on which probably evaluates very little apart from the evaluator's ability to get her grant to evaluate something and to inculcate a few dozen of his friends and then get another grant to go out and evaluate the first evaluation.*

A member of the parliamentary Opposition speaks:

> *--The reason for the program was not because it was the right thing to do, but because the Tories thought there were votes in it. The reason they're continuing it, again, is because there are votes in it--they got between 5,000 and 6,000 letters when they threatened to cut it off.*

A president of a provincial trustees' association reveals some of the same armour against the possibility of circumstances altering cases--or of being found naive or sentimental:

> *--One of our board members is very much in favor of letting each school have independent budgeting authority. She always talks about getting more and more community input, but she's not spoken on having community input when she knows what the community's view is and it disagrees with hers. We've tried to persuade her to modify her stand when she's inconsistent with community views, but she doesn't seem to hear.*

A board chairman goes on record:

> *--I think the administration tries to appear to be neutral, but in fact is unsuccessful. It's not difficult to unmask if you understand what the process is...say, on costs...We used to find frequently that if it was an issue upon which the administration did not want to have significant research done, then costs for research would be extremely high--$50,000 or $60,000. But if it's something that the administration wants something done, then it's a $5,000 item. In one case, they will say, "Well, Joe Smith is an administrator and we can put him on this project and it won't cost anything." When it's something the administration doesn't want, they would say, "Where are we going to get the manpower to do this? We'll have to go out and hire somebody."*

The cynic also can be self-punishing, chastising herself, himself, or the peer group, if only mildly, e.g.,

> *--Oh we board members never lie in our reports. But we don't tell the whole truth either.*

But when the slap comes at a member of the peer group, it can be sharp, e.g.,

> *--One of our trustees who's been trying to kill the French program just happens to be a professor who teaches English-language student teachers. He was out to kill the program because he wants a market for those English-language teachers. Or he's going to lose his job.*

Does one slide by stages into a cynical questioning of human goodness and sincerity? Weeks before being designated as an Education Minister, a legislator wonders whether he is tempering his idealism for "shady" political expediency, e.g.,

> *--Before I was elected, there were things I was saying that were plainly necessary for education. But now I always ask myself, "Should I say that?". Now I suppose that if you're going to be a politician, there's going to be some of that wondering. But I hope I won't change my opinions just for political gain.*

By contrast, a much more seasoned politician of education adapts a critic's bias:

> *--Some of my fellow-trustees are playing the political game that says in the community where I live, "There will be more people opposed to an issue than for it, and therefore I am going to take the position sympathetic to what the majority believes in"--so that they will vote for me next time around.*

In essence, such suspiciousness was commonplace among those who saw conflict, moralized, and sensed cabals.

Cabal-Finding

"In this area, you operate on the clan system, it's a kind of Mafia. That's where you find the influence," one respondent said, giving vent to his belief that a small body of persons self-interestedly pull the levers of educational power. Sometimes the clique is external to the province, e.g.,

> *--There's a little association called the International Reading Association, with a reading program that's in vogue, whose author or co-author is president of the International Reading Associaiton. We get our curriculum from them. Such publishers hire very powerful public relations people who, not so incidentally, are always other teachers...Their phony "persuasion" is hard to take.*

But usually the cabal is internal to the province. A board member yields this perspective, one that is rather common about bilingualism:

> *--Behind all of this are maybe 15 people in the province. They are all government employees feathering their own little nests.*

And yet, in the same province, a member of Cabinet (not an Education Minister) senses the cabal's network is more far-flung, if just as devious:

> *--Getting degrees from an education faculty leap-frogs you into top administrative posts and this is wrong, because these people don't protect the taxpayers. They protect teachers, especially since their salaries are tied to those of the teachers. The game of protecting each other runs right through the Department of Education and the boards. They are interested in everything but children. They set a poor example for children...I don't know why professional educators aren't interested in cleaning up their own act, keeping professional standards high...If you're looking for honesty in that system, don't just look at the people in it, for they will have a slanted position and be closed-minded. In education, become an administrator, then protect your buddies, bow and scrape to the superintendent, and you'll be treated accordingly.*

Finally, some cabal-finders are less angular, more avuncular than the preceding persons. This medical doctor, for instance, was rated as only moderate in his cabal-finding:

> *--Teachers try to squeeze in extra days off sometimes, not working the (legislated) 195 days a year, having inservice training or time off for marking exams when citizens think they should be teaching. At a time like that, teachers need to be told that they, just like the doctor who is competent but not accessible, have to serve their clients.*

The Interconnectiveness of Items

In the course of a discussion, the characteristics of conflict-mindedness, moralism, cynicism, and cabal-finding can blend into each other. The components of disputatiousness, then, are not always as analytically separate as sketched above. The mingling of characteristics can be seen, for example, in an excerpt from part of the first quarter of an interview with the voluble chairman of a large urban board. Through capital letters below, attention is invited to elements of Disputatiousness then are rolled up into one feisty train of thought. While choosing to speak about students' achievement levels for the conversation's first major issue, this British Columbian steadily strays to other targets. Indeed, the achievement topic is a vehicle for him to score the following points:

> *Chair: Once I got on the board, I discovered they were wasting and spending money like it was a scandal and a joke (MORALISM). I shamed them a little bit for the first four years (CONFLICT-MINDEDNESS)...and they talked about saving money and being responsible, but they went on spending lavishly (CYNICISM).*
>
> *Interviewer: Who are you referring to as "they"?*
>
> *Chair: A group of people who were in control of the school board for the past six years. They are evil people (MORALISM). They got on the board so that people (with special causes) would love them (for doling out moneys) (CYNICISM)...Their attitude was "Let the system go to hell as long as I'm going to be considered a nice guy by spending money" (CABAL-FINDING). These people were under the North American impression that if you have a problem, you might improve it by pouring money into it. But education doesn't work that way, in my opinion. The more money they poured into the system, the worse it got (MORALISM)...They love to see their names in print. Their lives are completely devoid and empty, and this is the way they have of making a mark. They love being phoned-up by newspaper reporters who ask, "What do you think?". You know, those board members don't know anything about it, but they shoot off their opinion; they don't have the courage and guts to say, "I don't know anything about it." They're publicity-hungry. They want to get re-elected, at any cost. Small people (CYNICISM). We can do much better than that...The Age of Heroes has passed: now everyone who comes under the public eye isn't given the admiration of society for doing something, but is considered a potential grafter. Now I don't mind the guy stealing so much as the guy who does a lousy job (for the public), and only wants to get his name in print. An interesting capable crook is a hell of a lot better for society than some of these incompetent bumbling jerks (MORALISM, CONFLICT-MINDEDNESS)...*

That's been the most discouraging part in sitting down with these people and putting forth ideas which I am willing to discuss intellectually. And getting back personal attacks on me which have nothing to do with the idea (CONFLICT-MINDEDNESS), or reasons that are unbelievably stupid and ridiculous (MORALISM).

Interviewer: When did you first begin to notice these differences you mentioned between yourself and them?

Chair: About a week after I was elected.

Interviewer: Really!

Chair: It doesn't take long to smell bad cheese (CONFLICT-MINDEDNESS, MORALISM, CYNICISM)...Now that we're in the majority, we don't really have to listen to or convince the others, the minority. We can treat them in the same way they treated us (when we were in the minority) (CABAL-FINDING).

That said, this chair picks up again on the theme of student achievement, later touching upon appropriate child-rearing practices, electronic typewriters ("...a quick memory super-electronics with plugs for the students' rear ends..."), district-wide exams, the gifted, and his city, e.g.,

-- ...we don't deserve to have the best doctors, the best symphony, and the best teachers, as they have in Boston. We are not a big, rich, famous culture, old-history type of city... .

INTERPRETATION

One must exercise very great caution in trying to explain the above findings statistically. To begin with, as in many studies by educators, the population of this study is a purposive one. That is, the respondents were chosen in accord with criteria set by the researcher (elective office and clout in education, as perceived by diverse high-level administrators). Since the most frequently nominated respondents pretty much were all interviewed, the population cannot be said to be representative of a universe of important Canadian politicians of education. A

representative sample would have been smaller. That sample would have been picked at random (possibly from a population of all provincial legislators and all board members in Canada), not by the reputational method followed herein. Even so, statistics usually associated with random samples can be employed to begin to suggest, not definitively prove, possible relationships. For the purposes of exploring the phenomena of belief patterns among Canadian politicians of education, this study's statistical manipulations do furnish the student with a rough start. The reader needs to remember, though, that the order imposed on the data is tentative and approximate.

Extensive statistical calculations were undertaken to try to sort out the best predictor of how a respondent was categorized on the disputatious factor. Considered were such variables as age, sex, ethnicity, educational attainment, political party, years of political experience, occupation, religion, and position in governance. The data indicate, however, that the best determinant is the region that the respondent is from; thus the criticism cannot be levelled that "thinking regionalism to be important, that's what we study, and lo, that is what we find" (Simeon, 1975); the regional variable was just one of about 20 that were considered.

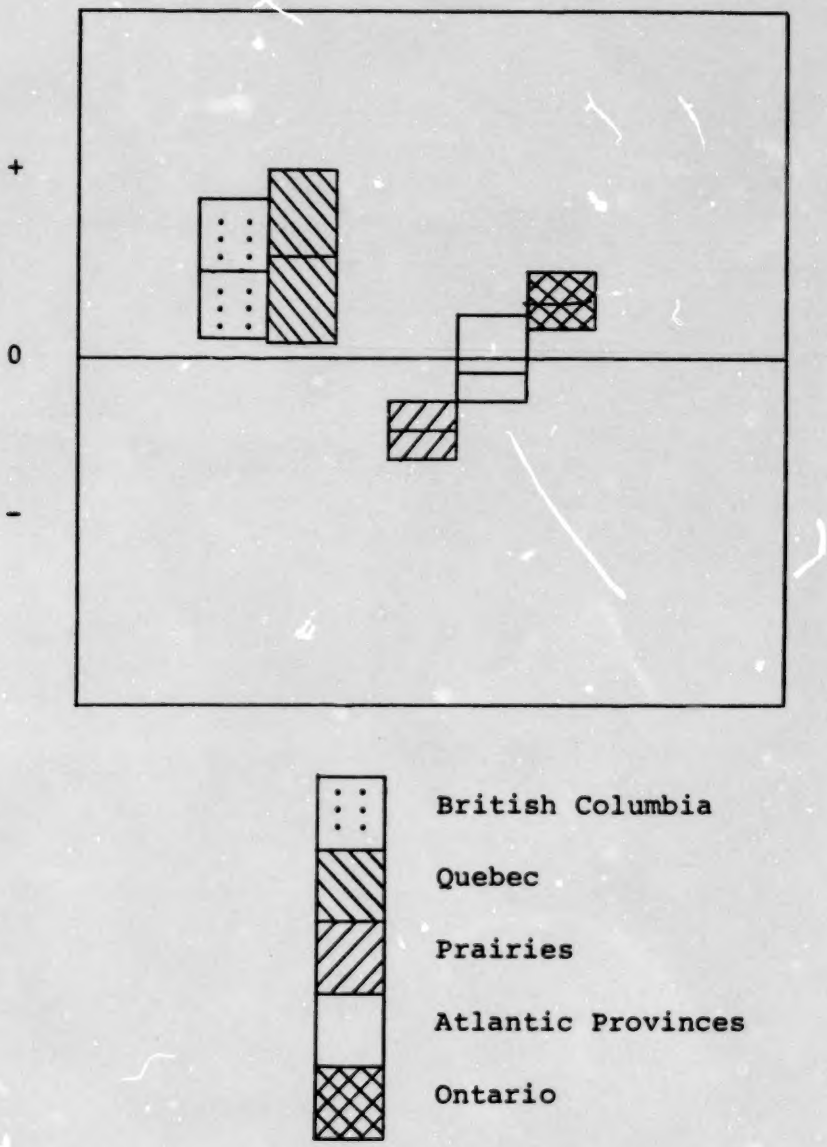
From analysis of variance, the regional statistics appear fairly strong, a comfortable enough distance from the zero point to indicate the possibility of tendencies:

TABLE 1: Scale of Disputatiousness

Region	Mean	n
British Columbia	.50	20
Quebec	.55	16
Prairies	-.43	46
Atlantic	-.07	65
Ontario	.21	34

These hypothesized tendencies can be expressed graphically,[11] in the sequence that each will be discussed below (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1 - Disputatiousness By Region



At first glance, a problem exists in the disproportionality of the figures in the third column back in Table 1; the number of respondents per region is not proportional to census figures for those areas. The opening paragraphs of this "Interpretation" section already have alluded to this problem; since this is an exploratory study and since the population approximates a universe of important politicians of Canadian education, for now the quota standards of random sampling can be put aside.

Nonetheless, the statistics of Table 1 pose two other difficulties that must be squarely faced. The first is the problem of the "vanishing respondent" with the small numbers in British Columbia and Quebec. Inevitably in the practice of social science, populations are too small. Since, though, this researcher believes that at this stage hints and suggestions may be useful for hitting upon at least provisional understandings of some beliefs of educational politicians, acknowledgment is made that the data are being "squeezed" fairly hard. Hence, the reader is advised about the necessarily lower precision of those two regions' findings.

The second difficulty arises from the diversity and complexity contained within the five Canadian regions. Thus, within-region differences can be striking: the Newfoundland of the outports differs from the Newfoundland of St. John's, not to mention the ambiance of the Atlantic Provinces' other capitals of Charlottetown, Fredericton, and Halifax. Out on the Prairies, Conservative Alberta may have less tolerance for dissent than, say, modern Manitoba with its recent succession of New Demcratic, Conservative, and New Democratic governments. A subsidiary problem here is that people in some regions, particularly in their border communities, may orient themselves more to another region than their own. Thus, this study's respondent from Kenora, Ontario related in some measure more to the values of Manitoba's Winnipeg (125 miles away) than those of Toronto (over 800 miles away), her province's capital.

Two defenses of the five-part breakdown of regions can be offered. First, it is a conventional sorting-out of Canadian environs.[11] Second, political scientists commonly assume that within a jurisdiction, a set of widely shared values do exist on how politics should operate and on what people in government should do. These values help to constitute a

political culture. Commonly, a political culture is held to be the product of both the collective history of a political system and the life histories of the members of that system. This paper now turns to an exploration of secondary sources on political culture to explicate the hypothesized regional configurations along a disputatiousness-conciliatory scale.

British Columbia

In a celebrated work on political culture, Hartz claims that societies such as Canada, founded by immigrants from Europe, develop a political culture that reflects the values and beliefs of groups that were dominant during the "founding period." The original immigrants comprise a recognizable part, a fragment, of their old society. Hartz sees the founders as able to put their lasting imprint on a new society by setting up the agencies and myths that imbue their values and beliefs with a certain nationalistic tone, thus making membership in "their" part of the world contingent on accepting that dominant ideology. A question that follows from this starting point is, "What cultural genes, implanted by founding groups in the regions, may have some bearing on the present study's findings?"

Among other things, this theory can help account for the disposition of British Columbia politicians of education to rank rather high on the disputatious end of the cognitive scale. The province was populated in the 1890s and 1900s by a steady flow of Britons, leaving a hierarchial and status-conscious society, one with increasing class strife and striving. Trade unions were emerging, in turn giving rise to the Labour Party. As Galbraith observes, the time of the province's founding was also

> a time when the British class structure was becoming more complex; the administration of an industrial society at home and a maritime empire abroad brought into being a large class of white-collar clerical workers, aspiring, upwardly mobile, and desperately anxious to disassociate themselves from the manual workers (Galbraith, 1976).

But manual workers did immigrate to British Columbia too, bringing along their own special quarrels and expectations. The two groups were a fragment of Edwardian Britain:

> Large numbers of British Columbians resolved their condition of status anxiety in one of two important ways, either by vigorously asserting their membership in the working class and their trade unionism, or by equally vigorously asserting the opposite, their bourgeois and middle-class status. The economic structure of the province, with its large corporations and large trade unions in the resource exploitation sector and its weak agricultural and mnaufacturing sectors, encouraged this resolution of the status anxiety problem. The political expression of this situation is the bipolar political culture (Galbraith, 1976).

Commonly, this bipolarity is expressed in two relatively exclusive sets of attitudes. Again, to quote a specialist on the region:

> One pole emphasizes individual achievement and economic growth. It finds its social centre of gravity among white-collar workers, professionals, and businessmen... The second set of political attitudes emphasizes distribution of existing wealth and social egalitarianism. It finds its centre of gravity among trade unionists, and blue-collar workers generally (Galbraith, 1976).

Rather than making for two distinct political cultures, British Columbia's two clusters of polar values are estimated to be symbotically dependent on each other, i.e., the competition that the two beliefs offer each other stimulates internal discipline in both.

To some extent among the British Columbia respondents in the present study, one of these attitudes finds its political expression in businessmen and professionals chastening "left-wing" leaders of teacher and parent groups. These politicians of education stress the importance of facilitating the achievement of the gifted as well as putting more pressure for success on the normal pupil. Disclaiming against child-centered schools which emphasize pleasant growing experiences, one merchant declares:

> *--We are firm about our position against "progressive" education. If teachers don't feel they want to adopt to the board's views and implement the board's policies, they are advised we should part ways. It's good to have such things clear-cut.*

To a male trade unionist, these antagonists are "fundamentalists who want to state everything in terms of the Ten Commandments." To a woman

retired from a union, those opponents have written-off public schooling and expect "the country's leaders to come only from private academies." She adds that "supporters of those academies oppose higher taxes that would help educate the 'riff-raff' of public schools." As chair of a small-town board, she also recalls having "to deal with a very miserable trustee" of the opposite (conservative) stripe:

> *--He threatened to sue me on numerous occasions, and I had to threaten to have the RCMP come in to remove him. He always felt that he knew everything there was to know about education. He would give teachers direct orders, he would take recent books off library shelves and say they were not suitable for children to be learning to read from. Once (in anger) he slammed a meeting door so hard that the picture of the Queen fell off the wall. I'd come home from meetings shaking from the experience. Once alluding to the fact that there were a number of women on the board that he disagreed with (on an issue involving the broadening of a program), he said, "I divorce the school board."*

Those who would redistribute resources more equitably serve of course on urban as well as small-town and rural boards in British Columbia. One Vancouver trustee, for instance, remembers:

> *--I was down in Seattle and saw an incredible number of handicapped, blind, retarded students in the streets and I wondered what we would do with them in Vancouver where we don't see so many of them going around...Maybe people really did hide the handicapped in basements here. It seemed that eventually we have managed to get over to people that governments do have some responsibility to look after these people ...Also I am opposed to football in the schools. I don't like the money that is involved in having a few males playing football when all the girl's sports have not got equal money alloted to them.*

In brief, conflicts in British Columbia's education swirled around issues besides those separating the achievement "free enterprisers" from the distributionists-egalitarians. Thus, disputes are frequent over French schools, e.g.,

> *--In having a program for francophones, you are setting one group against another and this is the makings of a war.*

Also, respondents take shots at Victoria, e.g.,

> *--Presently if you are a Ministry-employed superintendent, one of your aspirations is to get over to Victoria to work in the Ministry there. It's the good boys that get over there. If you're not "good," you don't get over there.*

> *--(The provincial government) has trouble in coordinating sectors--health, education, human resources. Each agency defends its own dollars and territory, and there's buck-passing.*

But rather commonly, respondents go back to attacking the other side's expediency and conceptions of itself. Perhaps one Minister of Education speaks for many politicians there when, summing up his displeasure with his predecessor's financing of universities "that are for the few," he acknowledges his own disputatiousness:

> *--I don't intend to be in politics all my life. So, I tend to say things as I see them.*

Quebec

Political culture studies needn't be confined to categories of analysis derived from English ideologies of conservatism and socialism (as in British Columbia). Hence, with different ideological frameworks, Hartz' "founding fathers" theory can be applied to Quebec. There, vast differences in political culture can be said to separate two founding fragments: (1) the francophone farmers and laborers from feudal France, and (2) the bourgeois anglophones who fled from the American Revolution to settle in the St. Lawrence Valley. The disputatiousness perceived among Quebec's politicians of education can be traced back, to some degree, to differing values of that bicultural society's founders.

But to diversify the analysis and to reflect more of the experience of the New World, one can employ a notion of Lipset--the experiences a society undergoes are more important than its cultural inheritance. Thus taking issue with Hartz, Lipset might have the researcher identify certain "formative events" in the history of the region, since those events have helped create values that make a permanent impression upon the region's institutional practices.

One category of event that certainly has molded whatever disputatiousness the province may have is the number of experiences that have made the French and English residents uneasy with each other. The British "Conquest" on the Plains of Abraham (a "Catastrophe" in the French-language history books) may have indefinitely stained relations between the two founding races: 77 years later, open conflict erupted again in what the

English call the Rebellion of 1837 and what the French call the "guerre des patriotes." In 1839, French was formally "eliminated" as an official language. But as opposed to disappearing as a people by being assimilated by the English conquorer, the Quebecois passively resisted the Anglo ways, language, religion, and technology. By the early 1960s, the French pre-occupation with survival was supplemented with a drive to flourish (épanouissement), for controlling affiars in "their own" province (Thompson, 1973). Then, in the mid-1960s, the province's educational system was modernized and secularized, a major event of "ratrappage" bringing the French systems up to the level enjoyed by the English boards (which had taxed their constituents more heavily than the French boards). Such modernization and nationalism became a prism through which the orientations of many Quebecois could be understood. First with a school board in the eastern end of Montreal Island in 1967 (Lysons, 1968), then by 1974 with the provincial government, steps were taken by the francophone majority to reduce the number of children entering the English schools; immigrants thereafter would have no choice of which system to attend.

In reaction to this formative event, an anglophone Minister in the Bourassa government reflects in an interview for this study:

> *--With Bill 22, I found a lot of clauses were discriminatory. There were injustices especially in terms of quotas. If the Bill's drafters had removed the contingency clause about how many could go to English school and excluded immigrants who were already here, then I might have thought twice about voting against Bill 22. But I didn't get far in proposing changes. The Premier had made up his mind that he was going to attract the nationalist vote and take arguments away from them (about how Quebec is exploited by English Canada).*

In the wake of the election of an independence-minded Parti Quebecois government in 1977, the formal status of the English language was down-graded. This formative event leads another former Minister in the Bourassa government to see cause for dispute:

> *--When you try to broach the subject of the fate of English education, when you try to bring about a debate on it, you get a closed-minded dialectical approach from the Parti Quebecois.*

An anglophone member of the legislature (National Assembly) finds the situation even more fractious:

--I am troubled by the incursions into English education and the deliberate de-anglication of Quebec by the provincial government...The bilingual French Canadian will be managing those who aren't bilingual. So many anglophones have left the province since the PQ win that anglophone expertise is almost all gone now...We will be like Ireland after independence.

But, as a francophone chair of an urban board points out, the PQ aims for more than replacing English-speaking "bosses" with French-speaking ones. Equitable distribution of resources and satisfaction of "real" needs are recognized as prompting certain moves in provincial education:

--The PQ wants to do more than just get everyone speaking French. They really want to do much more than that...They want a cultural revolution that will make the whole province socialist. Socialism brings everyone to the same level. There is a good quality about that, but there also is a very dangerous one. The arguments for this socialist viewpoint come from a certain strata of society--the protestors, the people who are anti-rich, anti-university, who want everything for themselves but who in the name of democracy and a form of socialism do not want any measures that could be considered privileged. It's a sort of rejection of class. Now classes exist in all systems...If you are born beautiful, you already are more privileged than if you are born plain. It's the same thing: we are not all equal. There is no society without class.

Incidentally, such a volatile atmosphere--of cultural revolution and wholesale changes in institutional practices--may breed leaders who thrive on disputatiousness. For instance, one board chair is open about a need to provoke, shout, and derogate:

--When everything is going well, then I get bored and I don't think I create the issues but I get turned on by the causes because I find them exciting. I can tell you honestly that during the whole hassle about Bill 101 (which further circumscribed English school boards) and the boards' opposition to it, I found myself very much at home and happy with the whole thing. I do not feel the pressure because I thrive on that. If it was not there, I would find something else to agitate about.

It is not known whether other Quebec politicians of education are as moved to communicate and spread their own internal agitation.

What is known, however, is that slightly more than in other regions, another class of formative events appears to be arousing disputatiousness: the government's management of fiscal crises. The offending practices can vary from the government's priorities in the arts to matters that seem at first almost petty:

> *--We don't have leeway in the use of funds for books. The government gives us $100 to buy black books. And we say we don't need black books, we need white books. And then we have to go to the Ministry and make a special case for white books.*

Yet the most Quebecois of the fiscal-related events involves cost-cutting measures which provincial governments have taken and which teachers have regarded as contrary to their interests. Those teachers seem to have discerned an antagonism between themselves as wage-laborers and the state or board as attacking capitalism. Aggressively they have made and won contract demands (Harp and Betcherman, 1980). (Relations between the two groups have not been eased of late by Bill 111; it swept aside contract rules regarding the teachers' hiring, firing, and work organization, in the process suspending federal and provincial Charters of Rights.) One result, as an Education Critic says, is that

> *--The teachers' establishment, their syndicates, have become so very, very militant that it is difficult to really find a true solution. Teacher-student relations have become more and more difficult to organizae because of all the minutes the contract says teachers are supposed to spend doing this and the number of minutes they're supposed to do that.*

Others complain about syndicates forcing the boards to cut the teaching time drastically, to reduce the margin of flexibility in the evaluation of teachers, and to otherwise erode management rights. One francophone trustee, since moved to Ottawa as a federal M.P. and member of the Trudeau Cabinet, reflects tersely the regret of most of her Quebec compatriots:

> *--Sometimes everything in a school program is going beautifully. Then the syndicate moves in and messes it up for you.*

The Prairies

To supplement an analysis of political culture, one can turn to understandings which have a firm appreciation of the structural bases of culture. One such insight is provided by Harold Innis. Though not a student of political culture per se, this political economist does provide an important idea about the process of cultural transmission. Unlike Hartz or Lipset who seem persuaded that ideologies or events determine

society's political contours, Innis maintains that cultures are affected keenly by the technology of producing and distributing ideas. When new developments occur in the technology of communication, the culture of the society also shifts. Innis' examples included the printing press as revolutionizing Western culture and the development of radio. Had this Canadian lived longer, he could as well have cited the development of television, inexpensive copying machines, and computers. In the same vein, Innis expressed concern that Canada's system for disseminating ideas was almost entirely in the hands of a foreign power, e.g., in his time, many Canadian students could pass into adulthood only reading U.S. texts.

His general understanding of the technology of communication can help illuminate the relatively low level of disputatiousness that may exist among the Prairies' politicians of education. On those plains, as John Dieffenbaker once observed, "there is only one thing to talk about... there's only one thing to say here--wheat." Now there also is potash, oil, and ranching to talk about. But, still, for much of this century, the harsh rigor of survial on the vast expanses of the wheat belt was a prime talking and worrying point. Life there tended to reduce individualism and induce collectivism; a pulling-together occurred against adverse turns in the weather, against common marketing and production problems, against disadvantageous policies of Eastern capital (e.g., discriminatory freight rates, monopolized grain elevators, inflated prices for imported implements). Lacking a colonial tradition in this virgin territory, the non-Anglo Saxon farmers had to establish their own institutional order, and they did that by nurturing a series of organizations crucial to their wheat economy. In an Innisian sense, ideas of political culture were disseminated through these non-partisan educational organizations, e.g., the United Farmers of Manitoba, the Saskatchewan Grain Growers, the United Farmers of Alberta. As late as 1950, for instance, in a typical municipality of Saskatchewan, one voluntary organization existed for every 21 persons, while the average Saskatchewan farmer belonged to four or five cooperativs (Brym). About these farmers' units:

> Although these bodies saw as their first task the training of more competent farmers, they also became mediators for group interests, performing an important integrative function in Prairie society, through the activities of their locals and through publications such as the Grain Growers' Guide...(This dense network of groups got) legislation that gave them such benefits

> as low-interest loans and greater control over the handling of their crop through co-operative elevator companies in Alberta and Saskatchewan and government-owned elevators in Manitoba (Smith, 1976).

In time, these and other Prairie organizations also successfully lobbied for a voluntary wheat pool and later for the Canadian Wheat Board, both of which provided farmers with more security than assured in the "free" market of private traders. Additional cooperative and voluntary associations also came into being, so that today this region ranks as a world centre for the cooperative movement.

A pragmatic and common-sense attitude of pulling-together appears evident in the conversation of the area's legislators and trustees. These are only snippets from their talk, but these bits help capture the non-disputatious temper of many of the region's educational politicos:

From Manitoba:

> *--I don't think you get what you want by threatening or by criticizing. I think you get it by emphasizing the positive and by getting your facts straight.*
>
> *--If the people elect trustees who can stand up to administrators on an equal basis and question them intelligently then the decisions will be a combination of the good sense of the trustees and the wise input of the administrators.*
>
> *--Everyone has to recognize the ideal and the possibility of achieving that ideal. And they have to compromise. That doesn't apply only to politicians either.*

A sense of closeness to fellow-officials and fellow-citizens surfaces in these remarks from Saskatchewan officials:

> *--I don't think I made any enemies as a trustee...Our Minister (of Education) was raised in a rural area, he went to country schools like we have here, he still has contacts out here, and he knows the problems firsthand. People in the Department also come from these areas.*
>
> *--When talking and persuading people to your point of view, I've come to the conclusion that you don't do it in a win-lose way. If you do it properly, what you end up with are some of your ideas joining with some other peoples' ideas, and you end up with something that is palatable. It's not perfect, but good heavens, look at the people who designed it. They're not perfect either.*

--You have to make sure that what you're doing doesn't offend or cause disruption among other groups in the neighborhood. The church is saying you should teach more religion and the parents are saying that if you do too much religion, then basic skills are going to suffer, and so you somewhat have to be the politician and try to pacify both groups.

True, in Alberta an assertiveness can be noted, but outright disputatiousness doesn't seem to be cultivated:

--We like to say "yes" to everyone and we haven't been too successful in being able to say "no."

--One doesn't storm the bastions at our board meetings very easily. You have to do it according to our rules and regulations. But rest assured, you will get a good courteous hearing.

--There is a great demand for second-language instruction. Some people don't say there is a "demand" for language training; they say "request." I say "demand." I have used the word "demand" in front of the Premier, and he is the one who corrected me. In French, we say je demande l'information. Demand is a polite word. He thought that demand was too strong; it should be request. Request or demand, it should be done.

Even with this practical push for moderation and this feeling--as one Minister asserted--that "there is room on the bus for everybody," the Prairies still have pockets of conflict-mindedness, moralism, cynicism, and cabalistic thinking. A few Manitobians do "get worked up about" some matters, some "are not ready for some of the ideas promulgated by the Ministry," and others have "worked to get rid of people that we have no confidence in." As well, a few Saskatchewan respondents perceive either an "insipid warfare between dillante teachers and uninformed trustees," or that "there are some real rednecks on my board and you never are going to do anything to change them." Simultaneously, a number of Albertans complain about the Department's "stalling tactics" or an interest group's "crass view of politics." But by and large, these notes of disputatiousness are moderate and the exception. For while arguments occur and political games are played and "charades are indulged in," the Prairies generally seem to sustain a civility in the exchange. That quality is exemplified in this aside of a Saskatchewan board chairman:

--After a fight on the closing of a school, a fellow came up and said how violently he disagreed with the decision we made, how much he was disappointed with the way I voted. My response

was, "Look, Monty, I respect you as a person, I respect you as a musical composer, I respect your right to hold any view you wish, and I would hope that you would respect my right to disagree with you. It's great to be able to disagree, as long as we don't disagree in a disagreeable manner."

The Atlantic Provinces

A final conceptualization now can be introduced, that of Marxian analysis: the material conditions under which a society produces its wealth (its "modes of production") are a major factor in determining the nature of a political culture. Students of contemporary Canadian politics have applied Marxian ideas to explain the impact of the nation's economic structures on political culture, i.e., to further their own monetary interests, mercantilists in the late 19th century sought to profit from the swap of staple products from the hinterland for manufactured goods imported from the imperial centre (i.e., Britain and, at a later point, the United States). In consequence of this pattern of trade relations, a colonialist's mentality took hold, discouraging internal development and expansion of industry (Marchak, 1979). This sort of neo-Marxian conceptualization can be interpreted as partially behind the relative quiescence of the political culture that may exist among Atlantic politicians of education.

Bereft of a robust and extensive industrial base and missing the resource-powered boom that the Prairies enjoyed until quite recently, the region's economy (including its agriculture and mining) was developed under the guidance of a few important mercantile families. For instance, fish merchants in Newfoundland profited from a "truck" arrangement whereby they gave cod fishermen credit in advance for those fishermen's catch. When, as often happened, the fishery turned out to be poor, those outport fishermen could fall into a state of permanent indebtedness to those affluent merchants of Water Street in St. John's. In the past quarter-century, that system has declined; yet, still

> the "truck" system has left a major imprint upon Newfoundland. Many of the cleavages and tensions in the society are a result of the semi-feudal economic relationships that persisted on the island for so many years (Bellamy, 1976).

For a more contemporary example of economic domination, one can consider that the five largest English newspapers in the region are owned by the K. C. Irving interests; this family also controls key foresty corporations (Norman, 1973). For a neo-Marxist student of political culture, the point about such fiscal underpinnings is that over the years the deprived population has become inured to (or tacitly accepts) corporate grants winning governmental policies that advance those giants' material interests, at others' expense. Indeed, given their economic marginality, Atlantic Canadians may evince

> "the wrecker's mentality"; as with wreckers who profit from ship disasters by seizing cargoes from ship strandings, Maritimers are patient and willing to wait for spoils (Bellamy, 1976).

To the neo-Marxist, any overall lack of disputatiousness in the study's Atlantic respondents might be attributed to a lack of competing ideologies about how to cope with the plight of the region's economy. By and large, the question of development has not been widely bruited about in ideological terms, as it has been in British Columbia and Quebec. Rather, as in the Prairies, pragmaticism about economic (and educational) issues seems to characterize most political discussions. If relative amity instead of emity prevails in the Atlantic Provinces, it may be explained by the region being passed-over by major waves of immigration. Newcomers presumably could have imported new economic values to challenge the infrastructure and to deplore colonial attitudes, but typically that has not happened. Conversely, the region has been a launching-pad for immigration to central Canada, hardly a destination for new settlers. Also, many intellectuals or better-educated persons who might have furnished a basis for transmitting a reformist ideology reportedly have moved away from the region, seeking jobs and education elsewhere; the less well-educated who remain must pay a greater precentage of the taxes, a situation compounded by their receiving lower wages to begin with. Thus in Marxian terms, an ideological flatness might be said to mark the political culture inhabited by the region's elected leaders in education.

None of this is meant to suggest the absence of conflict-mindedness. But somehow it is not especially fierce; the conflict can be endured or it seems containable. Four Education Ministers perhaps imply as much; e.g.,

--(In Nova Scotia) there is too much of a "we-they" attitude on the part of the classroom teacher and the in-school administrator toward people in my Department. There is an adverse attitude toward our teaching guides and toward our new material.

--(In Newfoundland) things in general come to be either legitimate or illegitimate issues. The legitimate ones are those that knowledgeable people perceive to be problems...and illegitimate or false issues are those where some interested group differs to suggest that there will be some great crisis if such and such a thing isn't done.

--(In Prince Edward Island) one of the problems of politics is that you have to state your view and stand by it, without changing it. If necessary, you suffer the consequences.

--(In New Brunswick) the people involved in problems in most cases will work things out by themselves. There may be radicals on all sides, but once the board gets down to the knitty-gritty, capable people come forward and resolve things. I get critcized for not doing things sooner, but I have to let situations deteriorate very badly until they are ready to accept my rulings...To those who disagree with my approach, I just light my pipe and they talk themselves out of business soon.

The level of stridency is stepped up among some board members in Moncton. They moralize, e.g.,

--Local board administrators are out of their depth, and that is due to the immobility of the teaching and administrative force. This is causing harm to the quality of education, since seniority and not rocking the boat are more valued than competence and ideas.

Blame-pointing is pronounced too among legislators in Newfoundland, e.g.,

--I'm concerned about the kind of education we're pushing in high schools now and about the future of rural Newfoundland. It's being pushed that it's beneath oneself to confine oneself to rural Newfoundland. It was felt that if you were going to be a success, you had to go to St. John's or Toronto. It was beneath you to go into the fishing industry or any of the trades. This was brought about by our choice of teachers who until ten years ago often were persons who could not succeed at anything else. They reflected the views of a rather small economic class. They had prejudices about blue collars and small places.

But generally, moralizing among the Atlantic respondents seems to have less edge, e.g.,

--(In Newfoundland) the provincial government is the servant of the people. If we want certain things accomplished, we have to make a demand to the government. The public has the prime voice. It's too bad that we board members often are unwilling to say what we want from the Legislature.

--(In Prince Edward Island), the Superintendent of each Division is remote to the rural people; after all, his office is in the city.

--(In Nova Scotia) professional educators have to be watched very carefully, in the same sense that experts in any field have to be watched very carefully by the imperts. Speaking as an impert, someone who knows a little about everything and everything about nothing, I believe that our society has generally become far too specialized to the extent where experts in a field tend to be the only people who know anything about it. Anyway, somebody's got to say to the expert, "You don't really need a new computer. You can't have the $6 million you want."

--(In New Brunswick) This November, teachers had a 50 per cent failure rate in English, Math, and History. The students were depressed over this. They had entered school in September with high marks and worried whether their failures were on diagnostic tests. An eight to ten per cent failure rate might have been reasonable, but not 50. So we on the board frowned on the teachers a bit. Our frowning must have had some effect, since the Christmas grades were higher.

Prior studies have delineated a high degree of cynicism among Atlantic residents, especially toward Upper Canada, Upper Canadians, Confederation, the citizen's efficacy in the political process, and the ethics of politicians (Bellamy, 1976). This study too uncovered some disappointment with others' ideals and practices, e.g.,

--(In New Brunswick) we had to go to the Department for minor repairs for schools, even for minor items like broken glass. It was straight patronage on the province's part.

--(In Newfoundland) in 1952, teachers were asked to give a donation to the Red Cross. Then a can of milk was 14 cents, and he gave a donation of $1. The teacher is still giving a dollar; his perspective about charity and community needs is years out of whack.

--(In Nova Scotia) I wonder whether the educational system is geared to needs of the people in that system. Have we lost sight of the ends? Do we have an entrenched industry?

--(In Prince Edward Island) we are trying to get a school built, but the government is procrastinating. It wants to see what the outcome of the election will be before it commits itself to us.

Yet Maritimers also are known for believing in the excellence of their educational systems in spite of meager financing. That belief may account for the above quotes pretty much being against the grain; most respondents avoid cynicism.

A prior study of the three Maritime provinces also discovered that residents believe that their provincial governments are controlled by "a handful of men" (Bellamy, 1976). All of the anecdotes from the previous section on cabals (see pages 18-19) are in fact drawn from the Atlantic provinces.

Ontario

One way to portray the disputatiousness of Ontario politicians of education is to compare a brief part of a transcript of a board chairman in the Golden Horseshoe with that of the already-cited chairman from British Columbia (in the treatment of the Interconnectivity of Items, pages 20-21). Both men spring from common ethnic backgrounds, both are well-to-do professionals, both have presided over large systems facing contentious issues. And yet, as a reading of the material below alongside the earlier excerpt will demonstrate, the Ontarian is more inclined to diffuse controversy. In a discussion that started with his reflection on public support of religious schools, he (like his average Ontario counterpart) shows signs of disputatiousness, but he does not go for the jugular:

> *--You go to City Hall and to the office of the Mayor, and there is no doubt who's in charge of the municipal system. There are secretaries, assistants, framed clippings on the wall, and you know that the power is here, with the elected Mayor. Now if you go next door to the office of the Chairman of the Board of Education, you know nothing is there, no real power at all. We trustees had to fight the educators just to get a filing cabinet for each trustee. It was 72 bucks' worth of filing cabinet for each of our correspondence, and that was the only personnel space we were able to wrest for ourselves (perhaps SLIGHT CABAL-FINDING, ADMINISTRATORS POSSIBLY BEING THE CABAL)...*
>
> *--On the board as we deliberated this issue, I had a feeling of comfort with the group, which I think led to a dulling of my critical faculties. The group's needs and the group interactions became much more important than wise or principled decision-making. The longer I am on the board, the more the inter-relationship concern shapes my behavioral pattern...When you work closely with people for a long time, you get to like them, you become very sensitive to their feelings, you begin to be afraid of being too critical. Also the system absorbs you. I think the story is that China was invaded oodles of times, but the Chinese managed to absorb their invaders into their cultural pattern and very often I have the feeling that I'm being trans-formed rather than having the impact on transformation myself.*

I'm not saying that it's an evil characteristic, this group business. Why, otherwise we'd be blowing each others' brains out all of the time (MODERATE CONFLICT-MINDEDNESS)...

--We have some trustees who do relatively little work on this or any issue. They even tend to put down the trustee who goes to some trouble to investigate and pursue a point. This do-little trustee then will say in debate, "We who have better things to do (than what the self-starting probing trustee has just reported on) know that we should depend on our Director." That means (in effect) that all of us should relinquish asking our own questions and expressing our own judgment and be a rubber-stamp like him (the do-little guy). Well, in backing the expertise of the Director, this guy tries to shame the housewife who had taken the time to study a problem on her own. She almost has to apologize for taking the board's time, she almost has to crawl on account of expressing her commitment and effort...That kind of putdown, when it happens, inhibits our decision-making (MODERATE MORALIZING)...

--You know on this, very often in our chamber, I get the feeling that the environment, the structure, the ritual is dictating the script. Very often, for effect, I want to say something outlandish. But if you want to speak, you have to be recognized. Once you start to speak, you have to stand up. You have a time limit. There is an audience and very often you become an actor. You are addressing the gallery more often than you are addressing the issues (MODERATE CYNICISM THAT IS SOMEWHAT SELF-PUNISHING IN THE CHASTISEMENT OF HIS OWN MOTIVES).

Now, partly by way of recapitulating the four approaches to political culture, the brief illustration below indicates how Ontario's politicians of education can be seen to have reached a level of modest dispuatiousness. First, Hartz's "founding fathers" idea. It alerts one to expect a conceptual connection between the Ontarians' middling disputatiousness and the values of Tory Loyalists who fled north to Upper Canada after the American Revolution. At first blush, a link seems elusive between the somewhat abrasive components of the disputatious factor and the Loyalists valuing of a society that is carefully managed, ascriptive, elitist, hierarchial, stable, and restrained. Those value have been assigned to the whole of English Canada; does that 18th century British ethos have the seeds of Ontario's particular disputatiousness?

Quite possibly. Someone with those values may have such an ordered view of the world that he or she is closed-minded to merit within competing ideologies. Yet in general, Ontario's politicians of education did not register as <u>that</u> rigid--else they might have come across at least as up-in-arms as the legislators and board members of British Columbia

and Quebec. A respect for tradition in "quality education," a push for high standards and firm discipline, a call for old-fashioned authority, a resistance of change for change's sake--these ideas crop up often in the Ontario interviews, traces perhaps of the earlier-day credo of Loyalists. The conservative's ideal of a community is there too but so are references to the interests of special-focus groups. Especially when threatened by more "progressive" outlooks, people with the founders' cautiousness may defend and justify their conservative positions with a measure of conflict-mindedness, moralizing, cynicism, and cabal-finding.

Once, of course, the Loyalists had few idea-mongers to compete with in Ontario. For a few generations after the Revolution, Loyalists dominated the region--their families, churches, and local elites presided over the private education of the elite's young. But by 1850, when United Empire Loyalists no longer could be counted as the largest group in the region (Norman, 1973), liberal values became enshrined: the government organized a large-scale public educational system that, however limited in range, was accessible to all. Then in urban centres, distant from the farms and small towns where many Loyalists had settled and stayed, 19th and 20th century immigrants became socialized and not by the founders. Guidance in adjusting to Ontario rather came from ethnic subcultures; members of those subcultures sometimes brought with them a socialist "fragment" of Europe. Against this pluralistic backdrop of varying political preferences involving some of the urban-rural friction that still affects Ontario politics, it is not surprising that Loyalist values today emerge as only part of the mix out of which disputes are resolved or carefully managed. If the province is politically a conservative one, it is a progressive conservative one, balancing major interests, mixing stability with timely reform (Gingras, 1976, Wilson, 1975). Perhaps sensing a necessity for "getting along" in such a "red tory" environment, Ontario politicians appear--at least in their cognitive predisposition toward disputatiousness--to be relatively mild-mannered.

Lipset, the theorist who avers that a political culture is formatted by formative events, believes the American Revolution to be English Canada's--and, by implication, Ontario's--basic experience. Unfortunately, that interpretation does not take the analyst in a direction distinct from Hartz' approach above. For education, probably a more relevant

formative event is one just alluded to above, Edgerton Ryerson's creation of the Ontario school system in 1844. To mitigate the parochialism of local elites, this bold Superintendent of Education established a strong central authority which had experts who prepared regulations, enforced the use of a single set of authorized texts, controlled the qualifications of teachers, and so on.

Again, an explicit link seems fragile between such a concept (Ryerson's systemization as a formative event) and the low-keyed disputatiousness of Ontario's politicians of education. The "moral," though, is that Ryerson's actions set in motion certain tensions that still arouse Ontarians. While some decentralization of curriculum development at the elementary level dates back to 1937 and at the secondary level to 1949, the conventional wisdom among many is that the Ministry's experts still generally call the shots (e.g., Selby, 1977). In this view, the enriched level of competence now found at the local level has worked to loosen or destroy Ryerson's assumptions (and those of his successors) about the necessity for top-down directon. A fair degree of autonomy is needed, e.g.,

> *--My feeling is that there is far too grayness to the whole process and in fact people who attempt to be autonomous frequently get squashed on in favor or people who are quiet (who accept Central's directive). I don't think that this is any favor to children as the reason that I think our society is in such a filthy mess is because people have either been forced or voluntarily given over their autonomy in practically everything to so-called experts, and as far as I am concerned experts are people you use as consultants, not as overlords, and if a society gets in a habit of giving over everything to so-called experts, they might just as well be slaves and automatons.*

Boards should show more initiative in charting their systems' destinies, e.g.,

> *--We end up writing letters of request to the province. But the School Act says that we can set policy for our board. I think we should move ahead more and do that. Let's get it done, instead of writing off for permission all the time. We might get turned down, but we could use our discretion more too.*

But an Opposition Critic, for one, does not favor the grassroots:

> *--There needs to be more centralization. The system simply is too loose. There has to be some way to monitor that goals are being met. Guidelines are too broad and allow local boards to do almost anything they wish...At the present time, every single classroom teacher, every individual school, every particular board does its own thing in regards to evaluation...The province does not clearly say what should be.*

Thus, a debate is joined on whether Ryerson went too far or whether he didn't go far enough in emphasizing provincial control. The impact of his "event" remains a point of departure for inter-level disputes of today.

Thirdly, the technology of communication--Innis' gateway to comprehending political culture--directs one to consider how educational ideas are transmitted throughout Ontario's political sphere. In part, the elites interviewed for this study can be seen as targets of a variety of institutional and issue-oriented pressure groups striving to [illegible]n information about consequences of desired or feared actions by go[illegible]ent. While members of a number of educational organizations do air their grievances from time to time in front of the provincial legislature, only the most innocent of lobbyists believes that such forays put them "in touch" with the powerful. Politically savvy groups, shunning such vulgar displays, instead make their way to offices east of the legislature where Ministry officials work (Morton, 1975). To be specific, lobbyists for labour, management, and special-focus groups in Ontario education petition there for redefinitions or expansions of legislative sections. They appeal for clarifications or proposals of their own. And they badger (Townsend, 1982).

Then, fairly quickly and conveniently, Ontario's mass media steps in. The most highly developed in the nation with the largest number of newspapers and the highest circulation rates (Schwartz, 1975), the media let the public know different positions of lobbyists and government. Of course, the media are courted, e.g.,

> *--For multiculturalism, we tried to orchestrate the media's support through editorials and stories. We had meetings with editorial boards which I would initiate, which I thought were important.*

Setbacks can occur, though,when this romancing does not take place. Another board's chairman recalls:

> *--we had an understanding with people at a political level of government but then, about five minutes to midnight, the whole thing collapsed. That was largely due to media reaction. The media panicked...Perhaps we might have worked a little harder in the pre-editorial phase; we might have better anticipated the press' reaction, the vigorous nature of their reaction. We suspected that concern might occur but I think we underestimated the tenacity with which the editors of the Globe and the Star dug in. They scared hell out of the provincial politicians...(We lost because) we were making too many waves across the editorial pages.*

The media are not simply neutral contact points. Especially in urban centers, they print and broadcast editorials which stake out conflicting positions on educational issues of the day (Fletcher, 1975). Toward this end, they may help shape a disputatious attitude of the elite. Or they may help shape the elite's agenda. Or they may enable actors in the political process to send or receive messages to or from each other (Cuneo, 1978).

Lastly, through a Marxian analysis, the reader can focus on the economic infrastructure of Ontario as contributing toward any inclinations toward vexedness that politicians may cultivate. Probably to many of the non-Ontarians of Canada, the "land of Opportunity" around the Golden Horseshoe is the fiscally central, smug, overly affluent home of posh corporate offices. It is the manipulative "have" province which consumes more goods than any other and that manufacturs more than all the rest taken together. Presumably, its satisfaction levels (over the relative affluence) should be high enough to dissuade conflict-mindedness, moralism, cynicism, and cabal-finding.

Nevertheless, of late, Ontario has been losing a dimension of its economic might to the West. Unemployment levels are up, as are welfare payments. Its North, remote from the economic heart of the province, is said to feel relatively deprived and alienated, especially when companies in mining towns make most of the vital decisions for the workers (Gingras, 1976); in Marx's terms, of course, these workers are forced to sell their labour on an exploitative capitalist market. Nowadays, as the provincial government exercises fiscal restraints, have-nots form delegations. These seem to make for a turbulent and disputatious environment deplored by several Ontario politicians, e.g.,

> *--Today you have got to go for the least amount of dollars, without making education high in cost...When I first went on the board in 1953, the word "delegation" was hardly ever heard of. But now, oh boy! I guess the people used to have the attitude that we'll elect you to represent our ward and unless you do something that dissatisfies us, you'll get re-elected and re-elected. But they don't do that any more...Today every administrative report that is brought to the board is ripped apart and much more discussion occurs. There's very little rubber-stamping like there used to be.*

A board meeting over, that trustee goes home, e.g.,

> *--and if there are no phone calls, I think things are going just great! But as chair there are always give or six messages for me to phone so and so. It [returning calls] keeps you going the rest of the night and the next day, dealing with people's problems.*

Conclusion

After pretesting of a semistructured interview schedule, 181 interviews were secured with reputationally important politicians of education across Canada. Politicians, who might have reason to conceal their views from a stranger, frequently gave subtle and candid reflections on their investment in school governance. Illustrative quotes from almost 70 of those politicians are included in this partial report--first in the "Findings" section to convey an essence of their outlook, second in the "Interpretation" section to delineate a variable that may shape that outlook.

More particularly, building upon conceptualizations and procedures developed by Putnam, this study was able to decompose an element of political beliefs of the laymen who have at least nominal control over schools. That element, the cognitive predisposition of disputatiousness, was shown statistically to be composed of conflict-mindedness, moralism, cynicism, and cabal-finding. Other statistical treatments suggested the possibility of legislators and board members in the Prairies and the Atlantic provinces being less confrontative and more accommodating than counterparts in British Columbia, Quebec, and Ontario. Ontarians appeared to be somewhat more calm than respondents in the two other disputatious provinces. But on the whole, these distinctions are merely suggestive; a random sample of political elites chosen on a regional basis would help pin down whether these possibilities are substantial.

The treatment of the subject from a descriptive point of view--with statistics and illustrative quotes--was coupled with an historical perspective. Or rather, the descriptive treatment was supplemented by <u>four</u> semi-historical approaches, as the researcher expanded upon Bell's suggested typology for understanding political milieus in Canada. That is, sources for disputatiousness were traced back to five regions' founding fathers (an idea of Hartz), formative events (Lipset), technologies of communication (Innis), and economic underpinnings (Marx). No one of these

semi-historical approaches seemed fully persuasive, and still other explanations may be plausible. If it turns out, for instance, that the forces of urbanization and industrialization are what are bringing Quebec, British Columbia, and Ontario to some commonality in disputatiousness, the respondent's region may be more of an intervening variable than possibly an independent one. But at this point, when taken together, the four approaches have a complementarity that seems to bring an order, however tentative, to explaining one cognitive predisposition of some elites. The four approaches also serve as an antidote to studies of political culture, pegged to superficial questionnaires, whose results are not placed in larger conceptual contexts. The sort of four-part synthesis developed herein may be welcomed by some students of the field, welcomed ahead of more discrete and isolated considerations of political culture.

The major contribution of this study, however, is its set of quantitative findings on disputatiousness, hitherto a factor unattached to Canadian politicians of education. For aside from questionnaires, manipulations of census data, and some reanalyses of others' findings, country-wide studies of North American education still are fairly rare. In relying on original and intensive conversational data to sort out some patterns within a sample from one nation, this study offers a unique picture of an orientation expressed by political leaders of education.

What are some research directions suggested by the above findings? At least four can be seen:

1. Random samples of politicians of education need to be studied to see if the provisional findings here hold up. Are the patterns real or due to sampling error?
2. Findings here need to be compared to those from other regional studies. Data about the West and Quebec appear reasonably congruent with existing scholarship (e.g., Simeon and Elkins, 1974), but data on conflict-mindedness and cynicism in Ontario do not "square," for instance, with others' decade-earlier research on trustfulness among citizens in the Golden Horseshoe (e.g., Wilson, 1975). Maritimers, particularly Nova Scotians, popularly are known as grumblers; that penchant needs to be reflected upon in light of this work's findings in that region as well.
3. Attention should be given to how attitudes relate to the politician's

actual behavior in tête á têtes with work colleagues and constituents, at board meetings and community appearances, in issues about policy formulation and evaluation. Decidedly, conceptual links need to be forged between attitudes, behaviors, and actual outcomes in the field. What precisely is the connection, if any, between a politician's orientation along the disputatious-conciliatory scale and his or her (a) vote and (b) later comfort about assessments of bilingual programs, for instance?

4. Refinements of this study's data base are underway. Three additional factors have been conceptually and statistically identified. One, similar to the factor reported on here, departs markedly from Putnam's work. With such conceptualizations, one may hope in time to better answer those questions put by Kimbrough and cited at this paper's outset, i.e., "How do political leaders decide?" and "Are their actions influenced on a compartmentalized set of beliefs?"

NOTES

[1] The reader of Putnam's book quickly will notice the absence of two more broad categories of belief in the treatment to this point, deliberational style and operative ideals. These factors will be treated in a subsequent report. Putnam and Dah's diagram also includes, besides determining factors and political beliefs, a third element (political action) and a fourth (political regimes). A discussion of those other considerations also awaits another time.

[2] Putnam, quite properly, rooted his discussion in a largely philosophical understanding of European movements. On the grounds that much of the experience of the New World lies beyond those European categories, emphasis on this work will be given to Canada's special historical circumstances. Bell's synthesis is valuable for bringing together four possible lenses for looking at those circumstances.

[3] Under terms of the British North America Act of 1867, provinces have overall and direct responsibility for education in Canada. The country's new Constitution of 1982 did not fundamentally re-delegate that authority. For a case that the federal government is overinvolved in education, however, see Ernest Hodgson, Federal Intervention in Public Education, Toronto: Canadian Education Association, 1976; for some counterstatements, also see George Ivany and Michael Manley, eds., Education Canada: Federal-Provincial Relations, Toronto: OISE Press, 1981.

[4] This is the "reputational approach" to identifying leaders. Often faulted as a technique in the 1960s, the method has "survived the wave of criticism." See C. Bonjean and T. Clark, "Community Leadership and Directions in Research," in Bonjean, Clark, and R. Lineberry, Community Politics: A Behavioral Approach, New York, Free Press, 1971, pp. 163-173.

[5] The number of Quebec respondents included in this study would have been larger if data-processing problems had been overcome. But, two interviews were lost through a malfunctioning of a tape-recorder, a transcriber lost a third tape, and a translator had to leave this project without completing the translation of a fourth and fifth tape.

[6] That long interview is the subject of the latter part of R. Townsend, "Impressions and Confessions: What Can Happen to an Immigrant Professor," in R. Townsend and S. Lawton, eds., What's So Canadian About Canadian Educational Administration? Toronto: OISE Press, 1981, pp. 191-209.

[7] This, for example, is the codebook item for conflict-mindedness on the first issue:

> Conflict first issue:
> How prominent are conflicting interests in respondent's discussion of first issue? Conflict of interest implies--and this is a crucial notion--that at least a policy would be good for one group, another policy for another group. Assume for the sake of this coding that the respondent's own position reflects one set of interests, so that if respondent mentions some other set of interests in conflict with "the right" solution, count this as a (low-level) perception of conflicting interests. (N.B. Use this code as a continuum, not as a set of discrete categories.) Take into account two factors: (1) how central is the conflict of interest in respondent's analysis? and (2) how explicit is the reference to conflict of interest?
>
> 5. Very prominent. Conflict among interests is explicit and central.
> 4. Important. Conflict among interests is explicit, but not central, or implicit in his discussion.
> 3. Present. Conflict among interests is implicit and peripheral, but present, e.g., she/he mentions groups whose interests are opposed, but does not discuss conflict among these interests.
> 2. Minimal. No differing interests or antagonists are mentioned. Differing opinions or perspectives on the problem are mentioned, but without the implication that these reflect conflicting interests. Discussion of "priorities" (with no mention of conflict of interests) would justify a coding of 4.
> 1. Absent. There is no evidence from the transcript that respondent perceives groups with different interests or perspectives on this problem.
> 0. Not applicable.

With more of such codes, a copy of the 45-page codebook is available on loan from the researcher.

[8] In answer to the codebook question, "How frank was the respondent?" the frequencies (averaged over the two coders per transcript) were as follows:

Category	Percent
Very frank	32.8
Basically frank	37.8
So-so	16.1
Basically reserved	10.1
Very reserved, closed, perhaps obfuscatory	3.3

The tau-beta intercorrelation, between coders 1 and 2 was .67, between coders 1 and 3 was .87 and between coders 2 and 3 was .69. This means that the coders generally tended to agree which respondents were relatively open and which seemed more reserved.

[9] Putnam used the varimax rotation procedure. Statisticians now consider the oblique rotation procedure as leading to a closer, "cleaner," more discriminating approximation of the underlying structure of factors.

[10] See, for a thoughtfully constructive discussion of this matter, Ronald G. Landes, "The Federal Political Culture in Canada," paper presented to the 1979 annual meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association.

[11] The midline within each region's bar represents the mean value of the factor. The top of a bar stands for the maximum value at 95 percent confidence, while the foot of a bar represents the minimum value at 95 percent confidence interval. The range for the regions is seen to vary in length; the shorter the range of the bar, the more the codings cluster together.

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